

ROUTINELY USING BOTTLES OR CUPS IMPROPERLY

(411B)

PARTICIPANT TYPE.....INFANT

HIGH RISK.....No

RISK DESCRIPTION:

Routinely using nursing bottles or cups improperly.

Examples:

- Using a bottle to feed fruit juice.
- Feeding any sugar-containing fluids such as soda/soft drinks, gelatin water, corn syrup solutions, sweetened tea.
- Allowing the infant to fall asleep or be put to bed with a bottle at naps or bedtime.
- Allowing the infant to use the bottle without restriction (e.g., walking around with a bottle) or as a pacifier.
- Allowing an infant to carry around and drinking throughout the day from a covered or training cup.
- Propping the bottle when feeding.
- Adding any food (cereal or other solid foods) to the infant's bottle.

ASK ABOUT:

- Developmental skills related to feeding including age and status of weaning from the bottle
- Cultural, medical, and other influences on these feeding practices
- Caregiver's support system for feeding decisions and food preparation

NUTRITION COUNSELING/EDUCATION TOPICS:

- Routine use of bottle to feed liquids other than breastmilk, formula, or water:
 - Use the bottle to feed only breastmilk, formula, and/or water.
 - Wait to introduce juice when the infant can drink from a cup. Offer juice only in a cup, and limit juice to no more than 4-6 ounces per day. Too much juice can lead to diarrhea, anemia, and inadequate growth and development.
 - Infants need nutrient-dense foods for proper growth. Giving liquids low in essential nutrients can interfere with adequate intake of appropriate, nutrient-dense foods and cause anemia and poor growth.
 - Routinely giving excessive amounts of juice or other sugar-containing beverages in any kind of bottle or cup can lead to tooth decay.

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NUTRITION COUNSELING/EDUCATION TOPICS (CON'T):

- Sleeping with the bottle:
 - If the infant needs a bottle to fall asleep, fill it with plain water. Comfort the infant by holding or rocking, singing, reading a story, or offering a soft toy.
 - Putting the infant to bed with a bottle can cause tooth decay and ear infections and increase the risk of choking.
- Bottle or cup use without restriction or as a pacifier:
 - Infants who crawl or walk around with the bottle or cup or who use the bottle or cup as a pacifier are likely to consume excessive amounts of liquid. This can interfere with adequate intake of appropriate nutrient-dense foods and increase the risk for tooth decay.
 - Instead of the bottle or cup, offer comfort by holding or rocking, singing, reading a story, or offering a soft toy.
- Propping the bottle:
 - Infants need to be held when they are given a bottle. This contact makes infants feel secure.
 - Propping the bottle can cause tooth decay, ear infections, and put the infant at high risk of choking.
- Review age-appropriate oral health care practices.

POSSIBLE REFERRALS:

- If the infant has visible tooth decay, parent reports tooth decay or you suspect the infant could have early stages of tooth decay, refer to a local dental office, the local public health department (public health hygienists) or Health Tracks (if on medical assistance) for additional screening and referral. More information about oral health services in ND can be found at <http://www.ndhealth.gov/oralhealth/>.